

Cobbler's Workshop (c. 1850)

Abstract

After the [guild system](#) was abolished in favor of [freedom of trade](#), practitioners of various trades were finally able to operate their own workshops. Offering a glimpse into one such business, this lithograph shows the employees of a cobbler's shop as they go about their daily activities. As the scene suggests, small workshops relied heavily on the contributions of women, and labor tended to be divided along gender lines. At the time this image was created (c. 1850), industrialization had not yet spread to all occupational sectors, and workshops of this size were still more common than large-scale production sites. For a while at least, the detrimental effects of factory work and surplus labor surfaced only gradually, but industrialization soon gained speed and began to threaten the existence of such small workshops. Lithograph after a drawing by T. Streich.

Source



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